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Instruction; A Poem - 1811

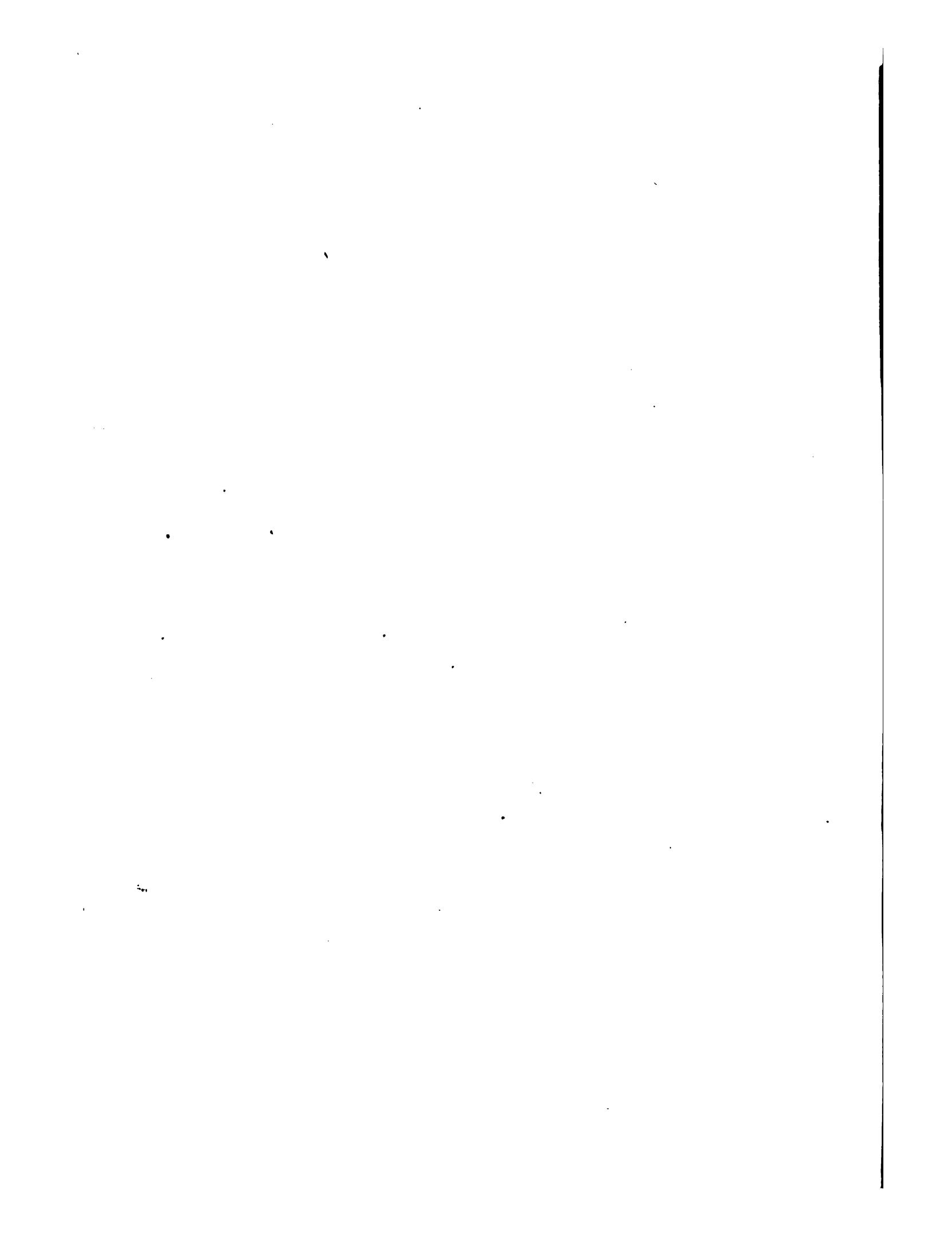


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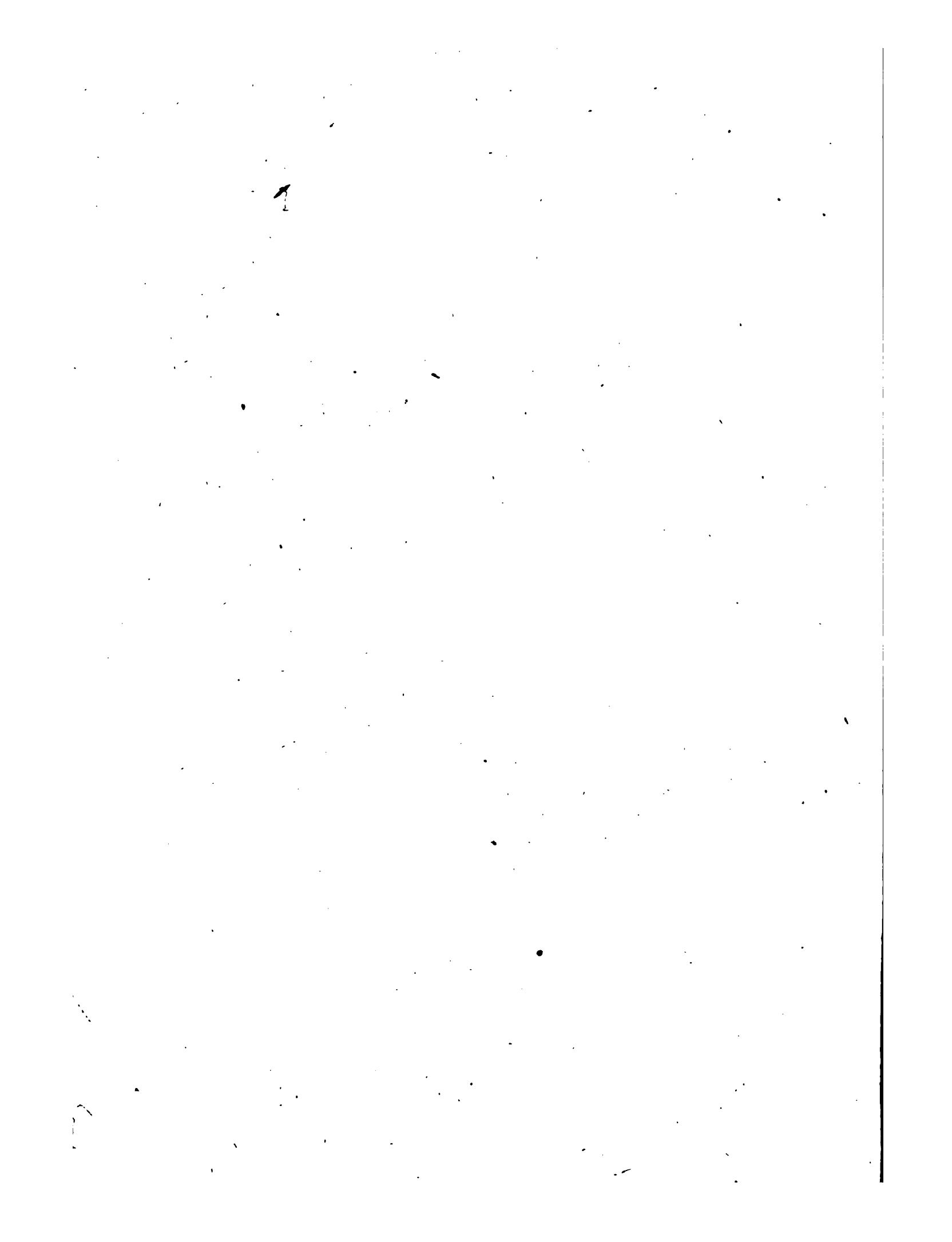






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John Robinson

INSTRUCTION:

John Robinson

A POEM.

BY ISAAC BRANDON, ESQ.

RECITED BY MR. GEORGE FREDERICK BUSBY, SON OF DR. BUSBY,
AT THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY DINNER OF THE SUBSCRIBERS
AND FRIENDS TO **THE ROYAL BRITISH SYSTEM OF
EDUCATION**, AT FREE-MASONS' HALL, ON
MAY 17, 1811.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY RICHARD TAYLOR AND CO. SHOE-LANE, FLEET-STREET.

1811.

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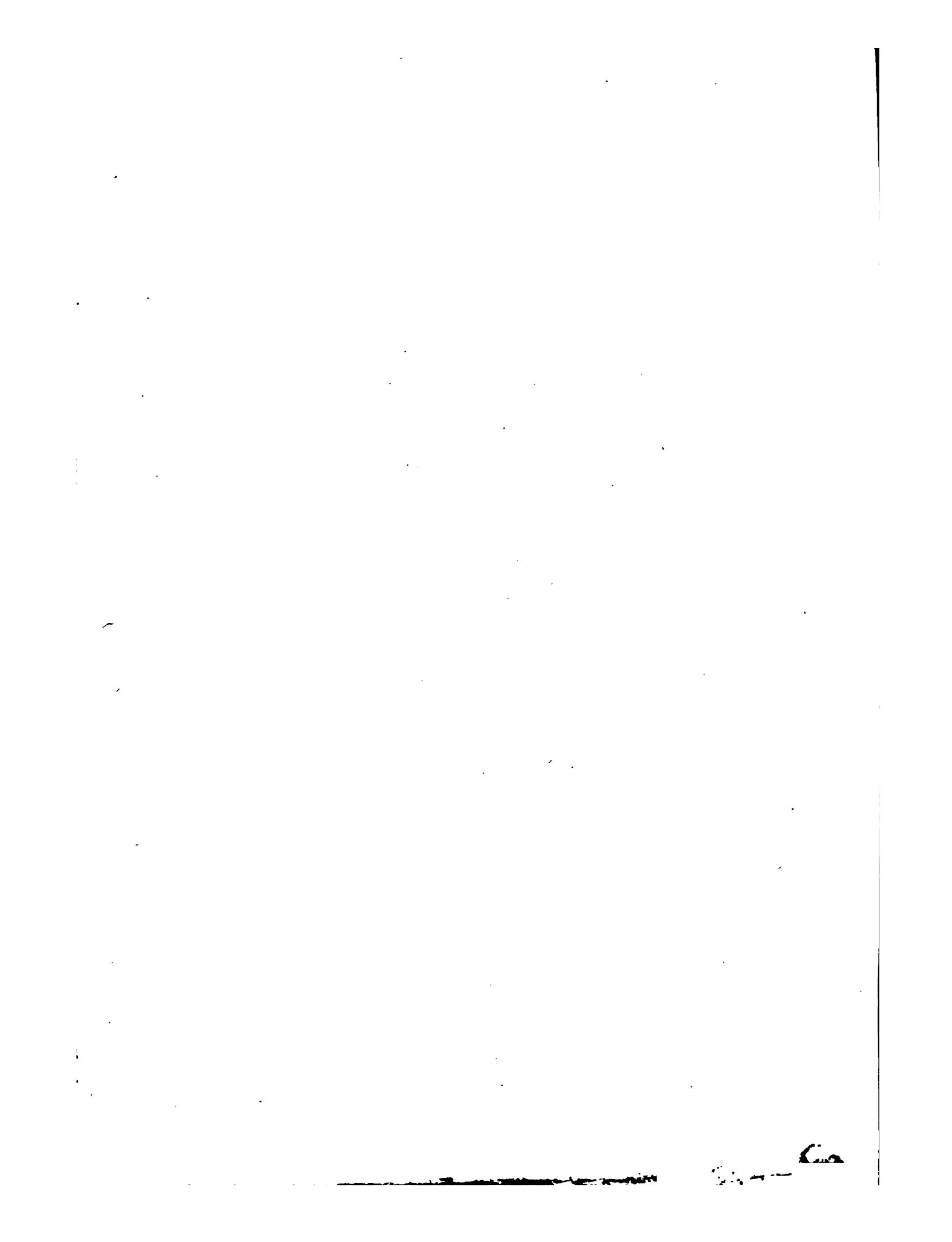
HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE DUKE OF KENT,

THESE LINES

ARE RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED BY

THE AUTHOR.



THE ARGUMENT.

To distinguish Man from the Brute Creation God gave him Reason ; which is rendered of no use if not cultivated : As God has made nothing useless, he involves the Duty of Cultivation in the Gift. Line 1 to 8.— Which Instruction is to be promoted ? that which holds out good examples, or that which leads the Pupil into vicious habits and every species of lawless principle ? 9 to 20.—How often, for want of Instruction, the finest talents are converted into instruments of guilt, and end in ignominious death ! 21 to 26.—The Blessings of diffused Instruction, by which many fine Geniuses may be called into action that otherwise would have been lost to society. 27 to 32.—Great Honour due to LANCASTER for the introduction of his fine System of Schools for the Poor. 33 to 36.—The SCHOOL described. 37 to 54.— The many future Sages and Heroes that may arise from it. 55 to 62.— As vicious habits produce the worst diseases ; so, on the contrary, these Children, being virtuously educated, will grow up a healthy and vigorous race, giving at once a moral and physical strength to the Country. 63 to 70.—Eulogium on the Lancasterian System :—Its happy power to facilitate universal Instruction by its Simplicity,—the multitudes it embraces at the same moment, its mechanical Discipline, and its Rapidity in communicating its impressions. 71 to 80.—Address to Instruction, exhorting her to impress gratefully on her Pupils, that the first Patrons of the System were the Royal Family : and that by the

benevolent support given to it by the Duke of Bedford and Lord Somerville, new Schools have been raised. 81 to 88.—Education not to be feared in a Land of Liberty ;—liberally introduced into the Army by His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent :—Calculated to add to the happiness and bravery of Soldiers, by giving them powers to appreciate the Value of their Country. 89 to 96.—The present *Era* the most truly glorious ; being distinguished by the Abolition of the Slave Trade; Dr. Jenner's Discovery of Vaccine Inoculation, and Lancaster's Discovery of a System of Education which will reach to the poorest child in the Kingdom *. 97 to 126.—The great happiness of possessing a benevolent and illustrious Prince who is the Patron of all that confirms the Well-being, and contributes to the Glory of the Country. 127 to 140.—Exhortation to Great Britain to civilize the World. 141 to 154.

* It is remarkable that three great Events, so pregnant with good towards the Human Race, should be the result of the labours of three Individuals, Clarkson, Jenner, and Lancaster, and nearly at the same Period. By the first, hundreds of thousands of our Fellow-Creatures are saved from Torture, brutal Slavery, and Murder. By the second, Millions are in Existence in the different Nations of the Earth, which have adopted Vaccine Inoculation, who otherwise would have perished in infancy. And by the third, Civilization will rapidly increase, and in the End promote universal Happiness.

INSTRUCTION.

To mark the human from the brutal kind,
God breath'd in man his noblest gift—a mind !
But gave that blessing like the fruitful land,
To yield its harvest to the tiller's hand :
Left to itself, the wildest weeds shall grow,
And poisons flourish where the fruits should blow.
This law is nature, of Almighty plan,
And God's command,—that man enlighten man !

O say, ye candid, liberal and wise,
In which of these a nation's safety lies?— 10

In youth impress'd with what fair lessons yield,
Or left more rude than cattle of the field ?
Base groups of filth, the pupils of the street,
Where playful theft and young debauch'ry meet ;
Young social villains that in rags are seen, 15
While wrinkled wretches mould the vice that's green ;
Whose shrivell'd hands, with drams, the infants ply,
Teach them diseas'd to live, and harden'd die !
Teach Plunder quickness,—back the lie, and swear,—
Crime's brutal laugh,—all leading to despair ! 20

Go mark the youth with manly feelings brave,
Sunk ere his manhood in the culprit's grave ;—
Firm to his band,—with fortitude to bear,
Genius to plan, and enterprise to dare ;
The sturdiest virtues moulded into guilt, 25
Which wisely train'd immortal Fame had built.

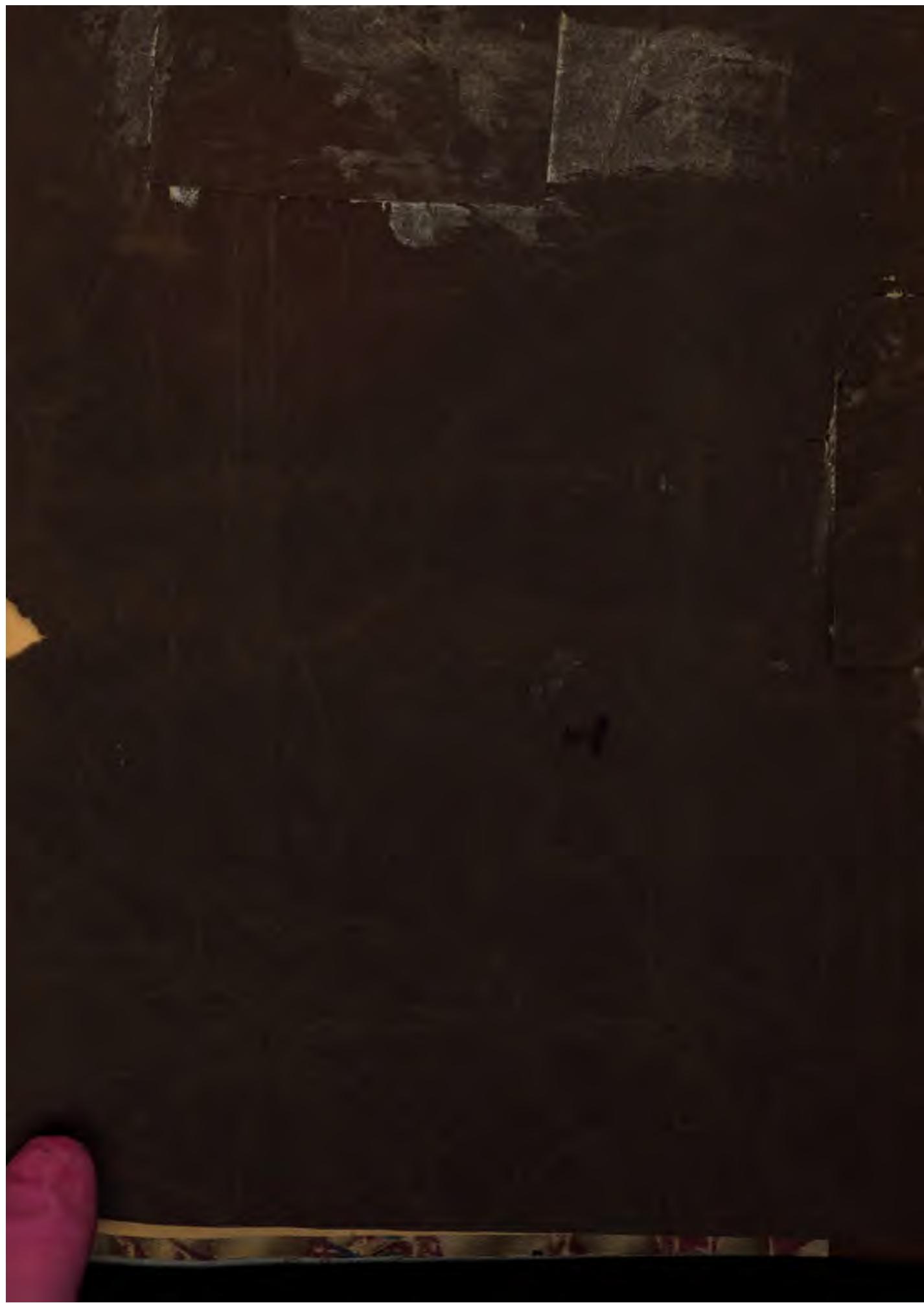
O bless'd Instruction ! now thy temples rise,
Virtue shall spring like incense to the skies !
Thy searching powers the mental mines explore,
And gems of Genius shall be lost no more ! 30
Each tender flower shall feel thy fostering care,
Nor waste its sweetness more on desert air* !

Honour'd the **MAN**, and deathless be his name,
Whose **SCHOOLS** now rise his monuments of fame:
Marble will moulder, that his worth may trace, 35
But these rever'd shall live from race to race !

Behold the School ! see rang'd in order fair
("Plants of his hand and children of his care,")

- “ Full many a gem of purest ray serene
“ The dark unfathom’d caves of ocean bear ;
“ Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
“ And waste its sweetness on the desert air ! ”

GRAY's ELEGY.





System of Genius ! whose effect sublime
Seems to enlighten without aid of Time * ;
Like that vast engine's mighty speed and power
Which stamps the coin by myriads in an hour !
The guileless children that we rang'd behold,75
As pure, and ductile too, as virgin gold !
Each like the coin shall take the stamp impress'd,
And sterling bear his monarch in his breast :
That patriarch monarch, by whose pious hand
They rise the strength and treasure of the land †.

* The quickness with which every movement of instruction is communicated, and the rapid progress of the children, are very impressive. The correct promptness with which they practise arithmetic, attended with action of the fingers, can only be comprehended by those who see it. The great beauty of their writing, their facility in reading, is truly astonishing, when we reflect that all is accomplished on these rude materials in the course of a few months; and shows what may be done with the mind under the guidance of a Tutor possessing ardour and genius.

+ To His Majesty's paternal and liberal feeling we owe the preservation of the system. His enlightened sentiment, "That he hoped every child in his dominions would be able to read his Bible," is worthy the character of a British monarch, and as worthy the eternal gratitude of an enlightened

INSTRUCTION ! bending o'er thy groups, proclaim
 The school's first patrons bore each royal name !
 And as the little list'ners lift their eyes,
 'Grave on their hearts who bade the fabric rise ;
 With cherish'd knowledge, grateful love instil 85
 The names of BEDFORD and of SOMERVILLE !*

people. The valuable effect of the system is strongly exemplified by the following extracts :

“ During the last twelve years, near seven thousand children have received instruction at Mr. Lancaster's own school ; and hitherto no instance has come to his knowledge of one of his scholars (although composed of the lowest classes in society) having been charged in any court of justice with a criminal offence.”

“ Robert Raikes, Esq. of Gloucester, the benevolent projector of Sunday schools, lately stated to Mr. Lancaster, that since the establishment of those schools in Gloucester, about three thousand children had received instruction under his notice ; and that during that time, a period of near twenty years, although he had regularly visited the county and city gaols, out of that large number only one instance of criminality had occurred.”

Fox's Comparative View, p. 65.

* The following advice, given to Lancaster by those amiable noblemen, strongly depicts their patriotism and benevolence :

Names ever dear where CULTIVATION reigns,
O'er Britain's youth, or o'er her pregnant plains !

“The DESPOT's rule must be o'er darken'd men ;
The tiger's home—the darkness of a den : 90
But where brave FREEDOM lives, no fear she knows,
To make men learn the blessings she bestows !
Th' enlighten'd KENT, excited at her shrine,
Spreads quick instruction thro' each martial line,
That every soldier civilized and free 95
Shall nobler shield this land of liberty !

Let sullen souls, who only praise the past,
Prove that each age is baser than the last ;

“ Above all, steer clear of party or faction political or religious ; let the great benevolent work you have begun flow in an uncorrupted channel to its destined end, unmoved in its course by the stream of bitterness, or strife, or envy ; beneficial to your country and grateful to the Almighty.”

Applaud the times when Inquisitions reign'd,
And noble Reason like a wretch was chain'd ! 100

Be our's to boast that æra good and wise
When list'ning senates mourn'd the Negroes' cries;
When virtuous CLARKSON with a holy hand
Diffused a sacred feeling through the land :
Track'd the dread scenes that stain'd the Libyan shore, 105
And bade the bloody traffic be no more !
Now to those realms the gen'rous Britons go,
Not to spread burnings, massacres, and woe,
With iron-tortures, and blood-starting whips,
And hearts of dæmons, that defiled our ships ;— 110
But with those arts instruction sweet supplies,
That teach the godlike good, to civilize !

Be our's to boast this æra's sacred worth,—
This very day—that gave our JENNER birth !

Where glowing altars mid unhallow'd graves, 145.
Show the wild people of the woods and caves ;—
There plant thy schools ! let ARTS and REASON shine
Till dusky chiefs shall learn their good in thine :
Their savage mountains whiten o'er with flocks,
Fields spring from wilds, and cities from their rocks ! 150
Far e'en as frozen seas a pathway yield,
Till floods of darkness shroud the icy field,—
With our brave sails our knowledge be unfurld,
And generous Britons civilize the world !

THE END.

